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ABSTRACT

Current teacher shortages are particularly acute in small rural communities, in certain urban areas, and in certain teaching disciplines. As educational and policy leaders struggle to find solutions to the teacher shortages, they are also questioning who should be delivering teacher training and certification programs. Community college teacher education models vary. Studies report that over 80% of U.S. community colleges support articulation models and have university articulation agreements whereby teacher education students can earn the first two years of a degree at a community college and transfer all their classes to a state university. This document identifies the following questions concerning the role of the community college in teacher education: (1) How real is the teacher education shortage? Is the shortage in particular fields and in certain areas, and why? (2) What role, if any, should community colleges play in addressing the teacher education shortage? (3) Should community colleges be allowed to offer teacher education B.A. degrees in underserved areas or in certain high need fields? (4) Are community college students in teacher education programs successfully matriculating into programs at universities? (5) Are students from these community college programs successfully employed? and (6) What research is needed in order to justify decisions regarding these programs? (NB)

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Community Colleges and Teacher Education: A Challenging and Controversial Issue in Higher Education

A Roundtable Discussion

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ED 475 797

Across the country, educational and policy leaders are struggling to find solutions to the current teacher shortages. The shortages are especially acute in small rural communities, in certain urban areas and in certain teaching disciplines. Simultaneously, these same leaders are questioning who should be delivering teacher training and certification programs.

According to a recent feature story in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Evelyn, 2002), "at least 20 states are turning to community colleges to help identify and train prospective elementary and secondary-school educators. (p. A22)". Advocates note that community colleges have an excellent track record of providing the first two years of a baccalaureate education, impressive minority enrollments and are community-based institutions quite accustomed to being responsive to community challenges, such as teacher shortages. Critics question issues of quality and congruence of mission.

Programmatic Models

Community college teacher education models vary widely. Studies report that almost 80% of United States community colleges support "articulation models" and have university articulation agreements whereby teacher education students can earn the first two years of a degree at a community college and transfer all their classes to state universities toward completion of a teacher education degree (Hudson, 2000; Floyd, *et. al.* 2002).

An increasingly popular model is the "university center" approach whereby community colleges and universities collaborate to offer complete degree programs on community college campuses. The "university center" model is advantageous in many ways, including providing access to baccalaureate

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education for adults who are unable to attend a traditional residential university. This model encourages community colleges and universities to remain "true" to their missions --community colleges confer associate degrees while universities confer the baccalaureate degrees while all classes are completed on a community college campus. University Centers are located on dozens of community college campuses including the College of Lake County in a suburb of Chicago, Illinois and campuses of North Harris Community College District in the Houston suburbs of Texas. In 2002, Central Florida Community College received a $800,000 federal grant to develop an enhanced University Center and to collaborate with universities and schools on teacher education issues. In the Fort Lauderdale area of Florida, Broward Community College's Central Campus is the home of a 4,500-student campus of Florida Atlantic University. Teacher education is one of the many upper division and graduate programs offered by FAU in FAU owned buildings that are located on the BCC campus.

Increasingly, community colleges are working with local schools and universities to offer on site and on line "certification programs" and other preparation efforts. Rio Salado College in the Maricopa Community College System of Arizona began offering an on line teacher certification program in August, 2001. Collin County Community College in Texas offers an alternative teacher certification program for new industrial technology teachers. In November, 2002, Palm Beach Community College in Florida was awarded a $1.85 million dollar grant from the United States Department of education to assist with alternative teacher certification programming.

The most controversial approach is the "community college baccalaureate model" whereby community colleges are approved to confer teacher education baccalaureate degrees while seemingly retaining their community college mission. Florida has been the most aggressive state with implementation of the "community college baccalaureate degree" model. In 2001, St. Petersburg College (formerly St. Petersburg Junior College) was given statutory approval to begin offering bachelors degrees in teacher education. In 2002, Chipola Community College and Miami Dade Community College were approved to offer teacher education programs upon attainment of accreditation approval and classes are expected to be offered in 2003. Ironically, while Florida's community colleges seem to lead the way with the "baccalaureate model", historically Florida has been well respected for strong transfer programs that guarantee junior level status of community college transfers.

<u>The Building Momentum: The Need, Research, Issues</u>

From a state policy perspective, discussions about the issues, models and roles of various sectors of higher education in meeting the challenges of teacher education and certification are gaining momentum. In fact, in a recent survey

almost 90% of state community college directors reported that the issue of teacher education is "hot" in their state (Floyd, *et. al.* 2002).

According to a report, "Tapping Potential: Community College Students and America's Teacher Recruitment Challenge", in the next decade approximately 2.4 million new teachers are needed in the United States and interest in addressing these challenges is high among America's community college leaders (Hudson, 2002).

The Education Commission of the States has launched a major funded initiative to study teacher education, especially in community colleges, and findings from their research is expected to be reported early in 2003. Reports and data posted to the ECS web site (ECS, 2002, support the significant role of community colleges in addressing teacher education shortages, in part, because nearly half of all U.S. undergraduate students begin their studies at a community colleges. Thus, community colleges are ideally positioned to increase the pipeline of new teachers in the United States.

In fact as these survey findings attest, many community colleges have gone far beyond the typical articulation agreements that might exist between the college and the university for teacher training programs. Cited examples of teacher training initiatives in the community college settings include a variety of alternative certification programs, para-professional training, tailored articulation agreements in high need disciplines, post baccalaureate programs for career switchers, and collaborative programming whereby university classes are offered on community college campuses. The momentum is building for community college to embrace teacher education challenges.

<u>The Community College Controversy: Challenging Focus or "Mission Creep"</u>

This emerging emphasis on community colleges expanding their leadership roles in teacher education is not without controversy. Some believe that teacher education belongs exclusively at the university level, while others emphasize the positive role of community college teacher education programs as an extension of their egalitarian mission. At the heart of the controversy is the reality that some community colleges are expanding their missions to include awarding baccalaureate degrees in teacher education fields. Others, including some state systems, believe strongly that community colleges should strengthen their partnerships with universities and schools to address, in a collaborative ways, teacher training and teacher retention issues.

In 2000, a new "international" organization named the Community College Baccalaureate Association was formed and is housed at Edison Community College in Florida. The CCBA sponsored international conferences in 2001 and

2002 (www.accbd.org). Most examples of baccalaureate programs described by CCBA that are offered on community college campuses, are those on campuses that are actually governed (often as branches) by a state university. The primary exceptions, as noted earlier in this paper, are in Florida.

While certain other countries are attempting to replicate the American community college model, community colleges are uniquely United States institutions that evolved from a junior college movement in the early 1900's and emerged in the 1960's and beyond as community-based centers for learning. Today, over 1,200 community colleges are sprinkled across the United States landscape in rural, urban, and suburban areas. Annually, these colleges enroll almost half of all undergraduates in undergraduate programs and millions more in workforce development and training activities. The community college egalitarian mission of access to education for the masses has resulted in a community college or center located within driving distance of every person in the continental United States. Geographically, community colleges are ideally situated to focus on teacher education programs in rural, urban and suburban areas.

The mission of junior colleges evolved from being feeder institutions to universities, to comprehensive colleges that afford access to various areas of education and training on campuses that are "close to home". Is this emphasis on teacher education beyond the associate degree an appropriate evolution of the mission of community colleges? Or, is this community focus on baccalaureate programs actually "mission creep", a movement that will diminish the role of community-based community colleges?

There are obvious philosophical and political ramifications to the issues surrounding teacher education and community colleges. Some universities fear that the future of their teacher education programs will be threatened, particularly by community colleges offering baccalaureate degrees. Some community colleges are feeling pressure from local communities to address critical teacher shortages. What is clear is that institutions of higher education need to address these issues in a thoughtful and scholarly manner.

Questions for Discussion and Inquiry

The research (and sometimes the lack of research) has offered a platform for some challenging areas for discussion. The most pressing issues may center on the following questions:

1. How real is the teacher education shortage? What empirical evidence exists to support and describe the teacher education shortage? Is a

shortage in particular fields? Why? In certain areas? What are they and why?

2. What role, if any, should community colleges play in addressing the teacher education shortage?

3. Should community colleges be allowed to offer teacher education baccalaureate degrees in underserved areas (rural and urban)? In certain high need fields (special education, bilingual education, sciences)?

4. Are community college students in teacher education programs successfully matriculating into teacher education programs at universities?

5. What happens to community college students who graduate from teacher education programs? Are they successfully employed as teachers? Why or why not?

6. What research is needed to ensure that policy makers have empirical evidence to justify decisions regarding teacher education programs at either the community college or the university level?

Each of these questions suggests even further areas for inquiry. For example, how real is the teacher shortage problem? In some areas of the country and in some disciplines, there is, in fact, no shortage. Indeed, some states have reported that not all graduates are finding employment. Conversely, certain urban areas and remote rural areas report an inability to attract or retain teachers. And while these observations may be more a result of conditions than of training, there are implications for teacher education and role of community colleges.

What is needed is an honest, open, and proactive discussion about teacher education including issues and challenges, questions for research and study, and stakeholders. This ASHE roundtable is meant to initiate such a dialog.

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Teacher Education and Community Colleges Survey

Preliminary Survey Responses

Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) National Conference – Sacramento, California - (11/22/02 Roundtable)

Dr. Deborah L. Floyd, Florida Atlantic University; DFloyd@Fau.Edu
Dr. Janice Friedel, Iowa Dept. of Education; Dr. Anne Mulder, Grand Valley State University

Note: Number of respondents =32 states. Represents a 64% response rate. September/October 2002email was survey administered to 50 state community college directors. Exact questions appear below in bold.

1. In what levels of teacher preparation are (some or all) of your state's community colleges involved? (check all that apply)

Frequency - Yes	Percentage	Program Area
25	78.1%	Have transfer agreements with 4 year college(s) Articulating 2 yr. programs with university teacher ed. Programs
20	62.5%	First 2 years approved teacher education program
28	87.5%	Early Childhood Education
17	53.1%	Teacher aide
19	59.4	Para educator
11	34.4%	Special education aide
8	25%	Offer 2 and 4 year programs at the community college
6	18.8%	Offer Associate of Applied Arts (AAT) degree in Teaching
3	9.4	Teacher internship site
3	9.4	Leadership programs for educational administrators
7	21.9	Other

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Note on Question #1 regarding programs offered in areas of teacher preparation
The following are some of the responses given in the open ended "other" category:

- Alternative Certification programs (Texas, New Mexico);
- High school articulation and recruitment (Michigan
- Credentialing program for early childhood administrators (North Carolina);
- Post baccalaureate programs for career switchers and Praxis I preparation courses and programs (Virginia);
- Early childhood (such as C.N.A. and Child Development)—(California, South Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Missouri)
- Enhancing articulation within the early childhood program (South Carolina, Okalahoma)

2. How would you describe the teacher shortage in your state (Check the best)

Frequency	Percentage	Response
20	62.5%	A major, critical issue that is discussed among state leaders
11	34.4%	An important issue, but one that is Manageable
0	0%	An insignificant issue
1	3.1%	None of the above

Notes regarding question #2 (14 state directors offered comments). Examples follow:

a) The Rhode Island state director marked "none of the above" and commented that there is no teacher shortage at this time. But, that there is concern about future retirements; however, baccalaureate institutions believe that their programs will meet the need.
b) Minnesota's director also reported that that state does not face an overall teacher shortage, but a shortage in certain areas such as special education (EBD and LD). The director noted other specific areas of shortage and commented that data show that Midwestern states, including Minnesota produce enough elementary teachers and in some areas they have a surplus of elementary teachers.
c) Early retirements, classroom size reductions and population growth has made this a major issue (California).
d) Texas projects a shortage of 40,000 per year.)

e) New York's director commented that the shortage is particularly critical in math/science and special education.
f) Washington's state director commented that, in general, they don't have a shortage, but Washington state does have a serious shortage in fields such as special education, secondary math, secondary physics, all the secondary sciences and bilingual and bicultural education.
g) Idaho's director noted that Idaho is a rural state with many shortages in rural areas. Additionally, some urban areas have shortages in areas of math, computer science and special education. The most important issues, as noted by this director, are teacher recruitment and retention.
h) Rural and inner city areas are in the greatest need (Michigan).
i) Special education is probably the most widely recognized critical need at the present. Other needs are in math, science and engineering (Kentucky)
j) Oregon's director noted that the conversations in that state are more about shortages in "appropriately prepared teachers and teaching staff". Also mentioned were continuing education and skill upgrades for teachers to conform to Education Reform efforts. And, paraprofessional training, technology training for teacher staff and raining in cultural competencies and language skills.
k) Hawaii's state director offered a website (http://p2hawaii.org) for information about a 10/21/02 white paper issued jointly by the University of Hawaii System, State Superintendent of the Department of Education, and Director of Good Beginnings Alliance. This site describes Hawaii's teacher education situation and collaborative efforts to deal with the issues.

3. Would you describe teacher education as a "hot issue" in your state?

Frequency – Yes	Percentage
28	87.5%

Note regarding question 3:
Seven state directors offered comments. Large population states noted that teacher education is gaining priority in their state as an issue and they offered comments regarding those efforts. Areas of secondary math/science and special education were mentioned specifically as high need areas.

4. **If you answered "yes" to number 3, who is this "hot" issue with (where is the Impetus for emphasis?) (Check all that apply)**

Frequency-Yes	Percentage	Response
26	81.3%	School superintendents and boards
25	78.1%	Political leaders
18	56.3%	Community college leaders
16	50%	Others

Notes regarding the "others" comments on question #4:
Five (16%) of the state directors commented that higher education leaders/programs are providing impetus/emphasis for this issue of teacher education.
Other areas of impetus/emphasis noted were business leaders, teachers, parents, and the State Commissioner of Education and/or Chancellor or State leader of the universities and colleges.

5. **Are one or more community colleges in your state awarding bachelors degrees in teacher education? (Check one)**

Frequency	Percentage	Response
2	6.3%	yes
23	71.9%	no
1	3.1%	no, but they want to do so
6	18.8%	Yes, but these degrees are awarded through or by a 4 year univer.. or in conjunction with a community college, or on the college college campus(s) by one or more Universities

Notes regarding question #2:

Florida - St. Petersburg College in Florida was statutorily approved in 2001 to grant 4-year degrees in teacher preparation. In 2003, Miami Dade Community College and Chipola Junior College will begin to offer and grant baccalaureate degrees in teacher education upon receipt of the appropriate accreditation.

Nevada also approved the approval of 4-year program in Elko, a rural area in the Northern part of the state.

Maryland – A bill giving community colleges the authority to grant bachelor's degrees in education was introduced in the legislature last session, but failed.

New Mexico and Missouri – Some university degrees are conferred on some community college campuses through their commencement ceremonies because the students enrolled in university courses on the community college campuses.

Minnesota- State regulations prohibit community colleges from awarding baccalaureate degrees independently, however efforts are underway to encourage collaboration with universities, particularly in areas of paraprofessional preparation.

6. Does your state have state level polities or procedures that either encourage or limit community colleges' participation in teacher education programs?

Frequency – Yes	Percentage
23	71.9%

Note: One state did not respond to this question so the percentage was calculated on 31, not 32).

Notes: Examples of director's comments offered in responses to question #6:

Maryland – Community colleges can only be approved to offer associate's degrees, not bachelor's degrees

California-Only six units of teacher education major course work can be transferred to a state university for credit

Texas – The State Board for Educator Certification has policies that encourage participation by community colleges

Florida- All community colleges offer the lower division courses required for a teaching degree and Florida has a statewide articulation agreement. Several community colleges have been approved to offer four year teacher education programs (see earlier notes).

Michigan-Community colleges are not permitted to certify teachers, but they are permitted to provide any part of a certification program that is accepted as transfer credit to a university.

North Carolina- A statewide legislative mandate exists that requires community colleges and 4-year colleges to articulate. Also, have a statewide articulation agreement.

Oklahoma- State Regents policy states that "Professional teacher education courses as required for state certification are offered only by institutions with an approved degree program in teacher education".
Virginia – Policy of community colleges offering 1st and 2nd year college courses, but unwritten agreement to refrain from methods courses.
Utah- Community colleges are limited to lower division
New Mexico- 1999 law enacted to allow community colleges to offer alternative certification programs. A 64-hour teacher education transfer module has been established.
Missouri- community colleges can only offer 15 hours of education courses.
Hawaii- Has several programs with joint applications to the community college with admission automatic to the university

States Responding to this Survey

Arkansas
California
Connecticut
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Rhode Island
Massachusetts
Michigan
Missouri
Minnesota
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
Okalahoma
Oregon
Rhode Island
South Carolina
Texas
Utah
Virginia
Washington

For additional information about this survey, including responses to the open-ended questions, contact Dr. Deborah L. Floyd at DFloyd@Fau.Edu.

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